





20 YEAR REUNION TOUR 2018

RIVERS ALIVE

Take Me To The River



Annual Report

Our Mission:

To create awareness of and involvement in the protection of Georgia's water resources through waterway cleanups.

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Message from the Chair

Can you believe that Rivers Alive turned 20 years old in 2018? That's twenty different super cool t-shirts that our dedicated volunteers are still proudly wearing! Thanks to the hard work of local organizers a whole generation of Georgians have grown up volunteering at Rivers Alive cleanups and learning to value and protect their local waterways. Prior to 1999, there were many local river, lake and coastal cleanups across the state but there was no collaborative effort or overall support. In 1999, Rivers Alive was formed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to help organize and provide support for the many community, corporate and government cleanups across the state. The first year there were 61 events with 6,534 volunteers collecting 99,385 pounds of trash. Our program has grown considerably since then. In the last 5 years we've averaged 253 events annually, with 25,000 volunteers collecting over 509,000 pounds of trash from our rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands and adjacent land areas.

Rivers Alive couldn't succeed without the tireless local organizers that put on the cleanup events each year and the thousands of volunteers that show up ready to make a difference. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division staff that run the day to day operations of Rivers Alive are the unsung heroes behind this valuable program. Together with the Advisory Board they work hard to develop meaningful messaging and educational materials that will inspire local citizens to protect their rivers. We couldn't keep this program thriving without our sponsors who fund our t-shirts and award luncheons and ensure that this important work continues. Thank you to everyone that has been with us on this 20 year journey. It is because of ALL OF YOU that Rivers Alive continues to be a thriving successful program making a difference in communities across the state.

See you on the river!

Gina Rogers
Rivers Alive Chair

Lineup



14,711

Plastic bottles



2,896

Foam pieces



2,193

Straws



5,714

Grocery bags



7,569

Glass bottles



26,359

Cigarette butts



9,771

Beverage cans

Special Guests



Life jacket



HazMat suit



Baby crib

Rivers Alive Committee Reports

Education & Messaging

For 20 years, Rivers Alive has been rockin' some of Georgia's most iconic waterways from Lake Chatuge in the north to the Withlacoochee River down south. Rivers Alive has brought together generations of fans through a mutual commitment to bettering our environment.

Resources we made available this year:

- Rivers Alive education poster included classroom activities adapted from Ocean Conservancy and NOAA's Talking Trash & Taking Action guide to increase student understanding of marine debris sources, composition and decomposition.
- Rivers Alive bookmarks featuring River of Words art and poetry from Georgia students.
- Quarterly e-newsletters to keep cleanup organizers and sponsors up-to-date on news and activities.

Event Coordination & Outreach

This year we provided our local organizers with resources like trash bags and field data forms, as well as safety information and waiver forms. The awards ceremony continues to celebrate the outstanding efforts of Georgia's cleanup organizers. Rivers Alive volunteers joined organized paddle trips around the state promoting cleanups and spreading awareness among citizens about how everyday trash affects our rivers.

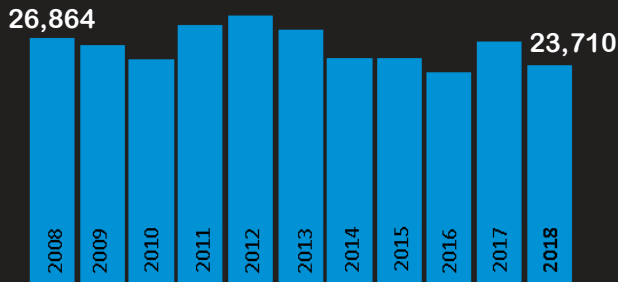
Fundraising

100% of state level donations were distributed to support cleanup groups. However, groups still rely on local sponsors to provide trash bags, gloves, insect repellent and first aid kits. Additionally, some groups procure contributions of food and other refreshments for their hard working volunteers. Many also find additional funding to purchase extra Rivers Alive T-shirts for their cleanup volunteers.

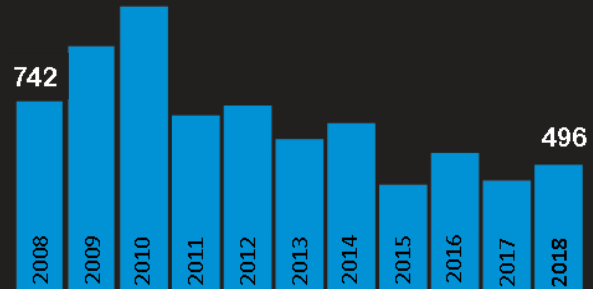
T-Shirts

Once again, our most coveted "Thank You" to our volunteers comes in the form of our Rivers Alive T-shirt. Some volunteers have collected all 20 shirts ever produced!

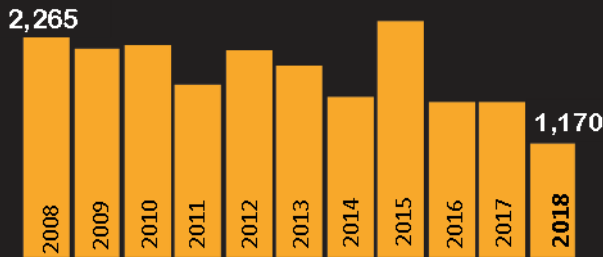
Top of the Charts



Number of Volunteers



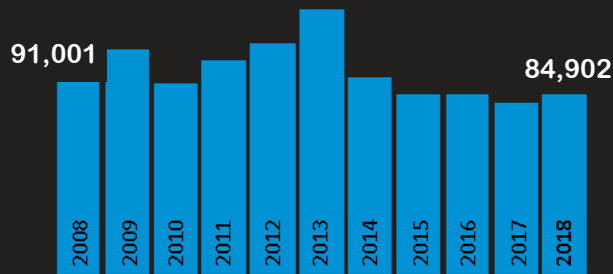
Pounds of Trash Collected (thousands)



Estimated Miles Cleaned



Number of Events



Volunteer Hours

The Spotlight is on Etowah Water and Sewer Authority

Just as artists depend on the support of their fans, Rivers Alive wouldn't be the same without its wonderful volunteers. For 20 years, people from across the Southeast have come together to clean up, support and protect Georgia's waterways. One group who has been especially active in our volunteer community is the Etowah Water and Sewer Authority.



The Etowah Water and Sewer Authority are rock star volunteers who not only educate citizens about the importance of environmental stewardship and water conservation, but they also take action. Under the Authority's watch, over 2,170 pounds of waste has been removed from the Etowah Watershed, including plastic wrappers and containers, rubber tires, plastic bottles, bags, cans and a variety of metals.

“Partnering with Rivers Alive was a great opportunity for us to work together on a common goal, to meet new people and have a little fun, too. Every cleanup was an occasion to invite somebody new from the community – someone else to rely on, doubling our resources and our ability to reach and teach others...I speak for everyone at Etowah Water & Sewer Authority, we are glad we were partners and are making a difference!”

- Doris Cook, Resource Manager

Their conservation efforts span past the waterways through county-wide initiatives that include partnerships with Dawson County School System for educational outreach programs and community celebrations for October's Clean Water Month. Their valiant efforts have contributed to a decrease in waste in the watershed.

Thank you, Etowah Water and Sewer Authority, for your partnership, continuous support and loyal stewardship to our waterways.

To learn more about their efforts, please visit <http://www.etowahwater.org/>.



Cindy Leighton
Wild Chicken River Cleanup

“It appears our cleanups from previous years have resulted in cleaner creeks and ditches running through Fitzgerald.”



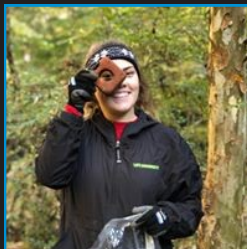
Yvette Wise
Braselton AAS

“Wonderful diversity of individuals working together... individuals young & old working side by side to clean up our community, great team work!”



Rebecca Pass
Gordon County

“They (4-H’ers) pledged to pick up trash and make others aware of the trash problem as well.”



Coming in 2019...

In 2018, Rivers Alive continued to educate Georgia communities on water resources and promote environmental stewardship through state-wide river, lake, and coastal water cleanups. Volunteers from all walks of life united under a shared mission: to protect the state's water resources. The results were outstanding; in the past two decades, nearly 11,000,000 pounds of trash have been removed from Georgia waterways! These impressive numbers could only be achieved through the successful efforts put forth by volunteers.

In 2019, we are recognizing our volunteers as the superheroes they are. Not all heroes wear capes; ours usually sport muddy boots, waders and a Rivers Alive t-shirt. Their secret weapon—trash bags and gloves.

While volunteers are keeping the waterways clean of polluting foes, a villain of another caliber has been wreaking havoc under the surface. This villain comes from many sources, varies in color and its microscopic size makes it difficult to trap in water treatment filters. It's name—microplastics. In 2019, we are lighting the Rivers Alive signal and calling our superhero volunteers to help bring an end to microplastics' polluting ways by keeping plastic out of our water.



Round of Applause for

Our 2018 Sponsors!



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Perdue
Jones Day
Golder Associates



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City of Atlanta	Georgia Water Coalition	Southern Environmental Law Center
	Jones Day	

I'm Here For The River

Rock Your' Shed Tour 2018

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1999 Everyone Lives Downstream – 6,534 Fans | 2009 It's All Connected – 25,976 Fans |
| 2000 Watersheds On My Mind – 14,774 Fans | 2010 Need You Year Round – 24,509 Fans |
| 2001 Keep Our Rivers Alive – 18,563 Fans | 2011 Keep Our Rivers Alive (Part II) – 28,245 Fans |
| 2002 Make It Georgia's Future – 16,766 Fans | 2012 Growing A Tradition – 29,272 Fans |
| 2003 Protect Our Turtles – 24,283 Fans | 2013 Love And Respect – 27,699 Fans |
| 2004 Clean Oceans – 22,623 Fans | 2014 Rivers Connect Us – 24,587 Fans |
| 2005 Lakes Need Our Help – 24,595 Fans | 2015 You Clean Georgia – 24,482 Fans |
| 2006 Clean Water For The Frogs – 25,020 Fans | 2016 Watershed Moments – 22,968 Fans |
| 2007 Girl With An Umbrella – 24,726 Fans | 2017 I Heart Georgia Rivers – 26,621 Fans |
| 2008 10 Year Reunion Tour – 26,864 Fans | 2018 20 Year Reunion Tour – Live ! |

Coming To A Watershed Near You...



To find out more and to volunteer as an Organizer, Participant or Sponsor please visit: RiversAlive.Georgia.gov

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